

# Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

August 27, 2015

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Northeast

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## Respect, Honor, Remember

by Tammy Wallace

Next month will mark MoDOT's third annual Day of Remembrance. To honor those we have lost, the central office and districts are planning ceremonies on Thursday, Sept. 17. The Central Office ceremony will take place at 1:30 at the Fallen Worker Memorial just west of the Central Office. At approximately 1:31 p.m., a moment of silence will be observed across the state to remember our fallen coworkers. Employees can check with their district communications staff for local event times.



Records dating back to 1946 indicate we have lost 131 members of our MoDOT family. Luckily, we have not lost an employee in the last three years, since Clifton Scott in 2012.

These annual ceremonies also give all of us an opportunity to recommit ourselves to safety and never add another name to the memorial.

Another way we commemorate this day is by asking employees to wear orange clothing, orange lapel pin ribbons or any clothing with the MoDOT logo. Of course, if you are working on a job that requires personal protection equipment, that equipment needs to be worn as usual. This is another way we can recognize we are one team and remember those we have lost.

Please plan to attend one of these ceremonies. If you are not able to attend, and can do it safely, please take a moment on Sept. 17 at 1:31 p.m., or anytime during the day, to pause and to remember.

## Ride for Remembrance

Once again this year, the St. Louis District is organizing a Ride to Honor and Remember MoDOT's fallen workers. The group will ride from St. Louis, traveling down Hwy 94, to participate in the Day of Remembrance ceremony held at the Central Office Fallen Worker Memorial on Sept. 17.

Registration is free and all motorcycle and classic car enthusiasts are welcome to participate. Fund raising through an optional poker run and t-shirt sales will benefit the 1033 Benevolent Fund.

Details of the ride are found at the following flyer: [2015RideforRemembrance.pptx](#). Online registration and T-shirt orders are found on Sharepoint - [Registration](#).



## Team Talk

by Roberta Broeker

I'm sure you've heard we are planning a special day at MoDOT to focus on safety. Our first Stand Up for Safety day will be Oct. 8. I hope what you've heard so far has made you curious. Go to our SharePoint site to see a short video from Commissioner Mike Pace on Stand Up for Safety.

# STAND UP FOR SAFETY

During the last few years, we've put more emphasis on working safely than ever before. As we continue to search for ways to be safer, we've decided to devote an entire day on just that; how we can work safer in the days ahead than we did in the days past. Whether you're located in a maintenance facility, an office or anywhere in between, we'll all spend the day focused on safety.

Part of the day will be about having good discussions about incidents or near incidents and what we could have done to work safer. We'll talk about our processes and operations and changes we can make to get better.

We'll check PPE to clean or replace items, check facilities and equipment, review tornado and earthquake emergency plans and other safety activities.

That's a short list of what we've planned. More details will be coming in the weeks ahead.

Thanks for all that you do, and stay safe.

## STAND UP FOR SAFETY

**A Special Day Set Aside for All Employees to Focus on Safety**

**October 8**

**Safety Activities for All Work Units and Divisions**

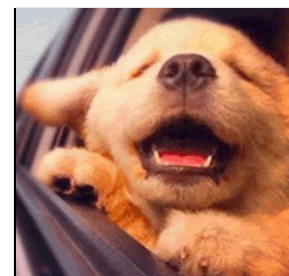
- 
**I'm Safe**  
 Safety discussion and video  
 Share close calls or incidents
- 
**What I Use is Safe**  
 PPE and equipment checks
- 
**Where I am is Safe**  
 Facilities checks
- 
**My Customers are Safe**  
 Operation and/or process checks
- Lunch (provided)**
- 
**So We Go Home Safe**  
 Recommit to Working Safely

**STAND UP FOR SAFETY**  
**Safety is A Core Value**

## MoDOT's 2016 Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign Sept. 15 - Oct. 23, 2015

MoDOT's 2016 Missouri State Employee Charitable Campaign will kick off the campaign season on Tuesday, September 15 with a Meet the Charity Event (final details on the event are still pending and will be distributed soon)! In conjunction with the first kickoff, we will be hosting a PET PARADE! If you have a pet, like animals or just need somewhere to donate a few dollars, this event is for you!

This is the chance to turn your pet into a star! We are asking anyone interested in participating who has a furry friend to submit a photo by Friday, Aug. 28. A voting period will be held starting Tuesday, Sept. 1, and the pets with the most votes get to "come to work" for the pet parade during the first kickoff! See all the details on the flyer here: <http://modot.org/documents/petparade.pdf>



We look forward to viewing all the pet photos, so get your camera/phone, and start snapping to catch that perfect pic!



CO MSECC Team: Jennifer Jorgensen, Kelly Mertens, Dawn Haslag, Reagan Schmidt, Patrick Haslag and Patrick Wood.

## New Medical Plan Option FAQs

In the next several issues of Connections, we will feature a few FAQs about the new High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with a Health Savings Account (HSA) option for 2016.

Employees are encouraged to review all of FAQs and other information on the website at <http://modot.org/newsandinfo/benefits.htm>, then attend one of the workshops being held in the districts and central office to see if this new plan would be beneficial for you. You can also contact employee benefits staff at 877-863-9406.

### Q. Who is eligible for the HDHP?

- Actives employees
- Non-Medicare retirees
- Non-Medicare survivors
- Cobra enrollees
- Vested members
- Non-Medicare work related and long term disability

### Q. Will I have a separate card for my prescription benefits?

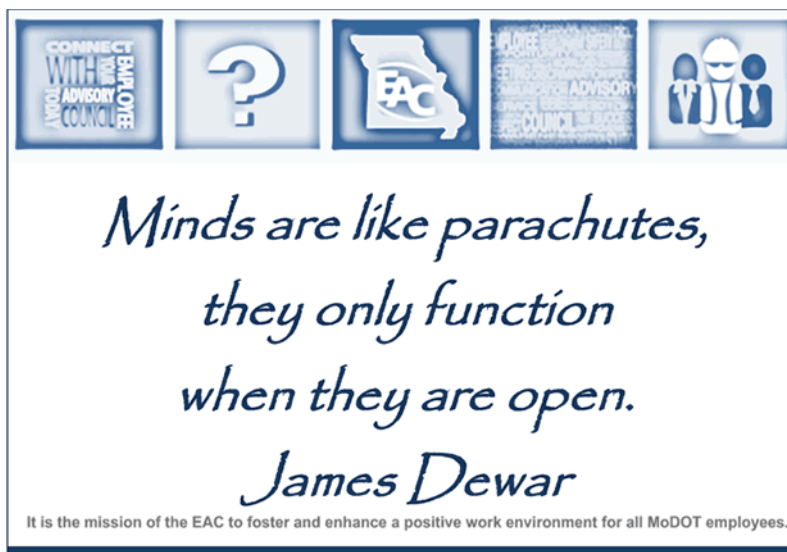
- Yes, you will have a medical card from Coventry and a prescription card from MedImpact.

### Q. Can I be enrolled in the cafeteria plan and also the HDHP/HSA?

- You can enroll in the cafeteria plan for the Premium Only Participation (POP).
- You can enroll in the Dependent Care benefit.
- You can enroll in the Commuter benefits.
- You can enroll in the Limited Scope FSA.
- You cannot enroll in a medical Flexible Spending Account (FSA.)

### Q. What does the employer contribute towards your HSA?

- \$250/year for single coverage - \$500/year if two or more people are covered.
- Contribution is only available for active employees.
- Contributions are made half in January and half in July.
- Prorated for anyone not enrolled for the full contribution period.



## Now Hiring: Seasonal Maintenance Workers



MoDOT is hiring seasonal maintenance workers at buildings across the state. For this winter season, Human Resources is testing the practice of allowing first- and second-degree relatives to be hired as seasonal maintenance workers. These relatives cannot work in the same building, for the same supervisor or in the same line of command.





Some examples of first and second degree relatives include spouse or partner, parent or stepparent, child or stepchild, brothers or sisters and grandparents or grandchildren. For a complete list of first-and second-degree relatives, please check with Human Resources.

Interested applicants can apply at [www.modot.org/jobs](http://www.modot.org/jobs).

## Statewide Fatalities Increase by 13 Percent Over Last Year

by Kelly Jackson

A single vehicle crash that claimed the lives of 16 people would definitely make the news as a national tragedy. However, just this past weekend, 16 lives were lost on Missouri's roadways, day by day - in single and multiple numbers.

According to the Missouri State Highway Patrol, 519 lives were reported lost this year in Missouri traffic crashes as of Aug. 17. Sixty-one percent of those killed were not wearing seat belts. The top causes of these fatalities were driver inattention, speeding, driving impaired and not wearing a seat belt.

"Drivers must take personal responsibility for safety when they get behind the wheel of a vehicle," said MoDOT's Director of Highway Safety, Bill Whitfield. "Fatalities are preventable if drivers take proper measures to ensure their safety and the safety of others."

Since 2006, Missouri has seen a downward trend in statewide fatalities. However, currently, there is a 13 percent increase in fatalities over this time last year.

Combined efforts in engineering, law enforcement, education and emergency medical services aid in the reduction of roadway fatalities, but there is still much work to be done to prevent traffic crashes from occurring.

MoDOT offers the following tips to drivers to help prevent a fatal crash:

- Never drive distracted.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Always wear a seat belt, and make sure your passengers are buckled up.
- Never drive impaired by alcohol, illegal or prescription drugs.
- Maintain a safe following distance behind other vehicles.
- Slow down, and obey the speed limit.
- Obey Missouri traffic laws.

Highway safety begins with you. Learn more by visiting <http://www.savemolives.com/>.



## What's Happening



### 10th Annual Transportation Day Golf Tournament

The annual transportation day golf tournament to raise money for the 1033 Benevolent Fund has been scheduled for Sept. 14 at the Columbia Country Club.

The event organizer, Central District's Travis Koestner, thanks everyone for their continued support and said everyone is looking forward to a great day of golf for a great cause.

Funds raised during the event support the fallen workers' families for state highway, law enforcement and fire fighters. We hope no one will need these funds in the future, but this resource has eased the burden on families by providing immediate financial assistance. Law enforcement and fire fighters also hold annual golf days.

There are already 46 teams registered for morning and afternoon tee times (8 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.), but there are still spots remaining. If you want to play or get a team together, contact Travis Koestner at 573-526-6998.

Lunch and refreshments are provided with the entry fee.



### Haunting Fun this Fall at Missouri's Amusement Parks

Six Flags and Worlds of Fun are offering state employees big discounts on tickets this fall. There's something for the whole family as these parks deck out for spooky fun. Click on the fliers below for all the details on dates and discounts.

[Six Flags Freight Fest](#)  
[Worlds of Fun Halloween Haunt](#)



### SKECHERS Friends and Family Days

SKETCHERS discounts for state employees begins Aug. 26 through Sept. 1. Shop online at [www.skechers.com](http://www.skechers.com), using Promo Code SKBBF315A at checkout, to receive your 30-percent-off discount.

Or print this flier – [SKETCHERS Discount](#), and shop at any of the 400 plusSKECHERS retail stores nationwide, or mention Retail Code 3F.

To find a SKECHERS retail store near you, click here - [Store Locator](#).

### August Retirees

Gregory J. Price – NE – 30 years  
 John P. Bickel – KC – 30 years  
 Diana L. Johnson – KC – 22 years  
 David E. Wood – CD – 31 years  
 Lester R. Shears – SL – 31 years

Paul R. Bryan – SW – 30 years  
 Leo Cologna – SW – 29 years  
 Dennis J. Greenfield – SW – 19 years  
 Robert D. Merriman – SE – 26 years  
 Theodie Morris Jr. – SE – 27 years

David S. Blalock – SE – 31 years  
 Lynn R. Lewis – SE – 26 years  
 Kurt E. Gribble – CO – 31 years  
 Lawrence W. Fritz – CO – 24 years

### In Memoriam

Wade Hildenbrand (active employee)  
 KC – August 3  
 Robert Dodd (active employee)  
 SE – August 14  
 Martin Weekley  
 Former D4 – July 22  
 Wayne Wickham  
 Former D5 – July 27  
 Paul Dibble  
 Former D6 – July 27

James Graham  
 Former D3 – July 28  
 Lyndell Scott  
 Former D3 – July 30  
 Charles Kincaid – July 30  
 Former D4  
 Jerry Ray  
 St. Louis – August 1  
 Bill Lister  
 CO – August 2

Edward Schnitzler  
 Former D6 – August 2  
 Robert Wiley  
 Former D4 – August 4  
 Donald Barton  
 Former D8 – August 5  
 Harold Knapp  
 Former D5 – August 6

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Communications – MoDOT  
 P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102  
 573.751.2840 / [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org)

### Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at [Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov](mailto:Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov).

### Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class

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## Kansas City Port Back in Action

Barges are once again docked at the Port of Kansas City. During the week of Aug. 17, the port reopened and received its first barge shipment in eight years. The reopening of the port is the culmination of years of work by Port K.C. Over the past three years, Port KC demolished a warehouse, made electrical upgrades, rehabbed the conveyor and made lighting improvements. Plans are currently underway to reconnect the port to rail. The reopening effort was supported by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission and MoDOT.



## August Health and Safety Tips *Backing Safety*

The most effective way to avoid a backing incident is: **DON'T BACK UP!** Plan your exit when you arrive to avoid future backing. Pull through or park on the curb when possible. Only back up when you have no other choice.

Nationally, backing accidents are very common but usually avoidable when using a spotter. Often in these situations, either the driver did not know someone was behind the vehicle or the driver lost sight of the spotter. Here are a few highlights on how to safely work with a spotter as the driver of a vehicle and to safely be a spotter for a driver:

- Hold daily safety discussions with all involved employees to outline and review the procedures and safety items required for the tasks assigned.
- Before backing, doing a circle check around your vehicle will allow you to see any hazards that may be unnoticed from the driver's seat.
- Ensure that spotters and drivers agree on hand signals before backing up.
- Minimize, to the extent possible, work that must be done by workers on foot near moving vehicles and equipment.
- Define blind spots and prohibit employees on foot from entering these areas.
- All vehicle and equipment operators/drivers, upon entering the work area, should look for an available person to spot for them. If a spotter is not readily available, they should try to find someone to spot for them.
- Spotters should be designated and advised to look at the side mirrors of the backing vehicle or equipment. If they cannot see the driver in one of the side mirrors, they are in a blind spot.
- The equipment or vehicle operator/driver and spotter shall maintain continuous visual and verbal contact.
- If the vehicle or equipment operator/driver loses sight of or communication with the spotter, they **SHALL STOP IMMEDIATELY!**
- Operators and drivers shall always obey the signal of the spotter and never back up or move in congested areas without the spotter indicating the path is clear.
- Vehicles and equipment operators/drivers shall have the windows rolled down.
- Neither the vehicle or equipment operator/driver, nor the spotter, shall be speaking on, texting with or otherwise operating or viewing a cell phone or other personal data device.
- The spotter shall stand alone. If the spotter is in conversation with another person, the driver shall STOP.



- The spotter shall be aware of the area's hazards for the vehicle/equipment they are spotting, including but not limited to: overhead obstacles, items that could be in the line of impact (buildings, vehicles, trees, etc.), soft ground, ditches/trenches, slopes, etc.
- Spotters must always be aware of the terrain/trip hazards, being careful not to lose their footing.
- Employees on foot shall maintain a safe minimum distance between themselves and the moving vehicles and equipment.
- The spotter shall always have an escape route.
- The spotter shall be wearing MoDOT approved high visibility safety apparel and a hard hat in accordance with Safety Policies 1.0 and 1.6.
- During nighttime spotting operations, in addition to the standard Class III reflective clothing, the spotter shall use a flashlight.

## Central Office Happenings



### Introduction to SharePoint

Tuesday, Sept. 16

9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

In person at Central Office HR Training Room B  
601 West Main, Jefferson City (behind the old Garage Annex), or from anywhere via video conference

In this class you will learn how to navigate around SharePoint and how to save, create and manage your files.

Enrollees are required to bring a laptop to the class. If you do not have a laptop, contact the IS Service Desk (573) 751-5000 to reserve one, or create a reservation online at: <http://sharepoint/sites/is/smo/reserve/default.aspx>

To sign up for one of these classes, go to MoDOT U and select "Introduction to SharePoint".

For questions, contact Anita Buddemeyer: [anita.buddemeyer@modot.mo.gov](mailto:anita.buddemeyer@modot.mo.gov) or (573) 526-7931.



### Deferred Comp Consultations

Tuesday, Sept. 1

Central Office, Room 204

Wednesday, Sept. 2

601 W Main, HR Library

Thursday, Sept. 10

830 MoDOT Dr, Orange Room

Don Wilson, education specialist with the State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan, will be conducting FREE one-on-one consultations on the following dates:

Individual meetings begin at 8:30 a.m. and will last roughly 20-30 minutes. His visit will give employees who participate in the Plan an opportunity to increase contributions, change

beneficiaries or ask Plan questions.

Employees who are not currently enrolled in the deferred compensation plan are also encouraged to meet with Don as he can assist you with enrollment and discuss important Plan options and features.

If you would like to set up a specific time to speak to Don, please enroll online. You can also reach him by phone at 800-392-0925 opt. 3, ext. 2 or 573-353-9999, as well as via email at [DFWilson@icmarc.org](mailto:DFWilson@icmarc.org).

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Editor: Tammy Wallace

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We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at [Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov](mailto:Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov).

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## Northwest District Day at the State Fair

Six enthusiastic Northwest District employees manned displays inside the Highway Gardens at the Missouri State Fair on its opening day this year. Thanks go to (L-R in photo below): Chillicothe Intermediate Maintenance Worker Ray Peel, Senior Financial Services Specialist Judy Magruder, Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Joseph Turner, Risk Management Technician Danielle Lankford, Senior Equipment Technician Bryant Nelson, and Transportation Project Designer Russ O'Daniell. Thank you for representing the Northwest District and MoDOT at the Fair!



Outdoor Advertising Specialist Melissa Schmitz and her daughter Cecelia posed with Barrel Bob and Baby Bob while visiting the Highway Gardens at this year's Missouri State Fair.



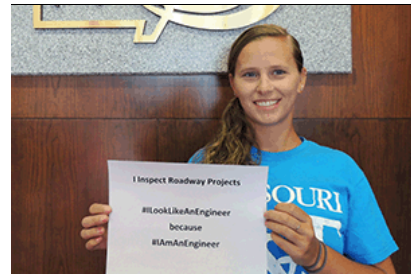
Outdoor Advertising Specialist Melissa Schmitz looks natural behind the wheel of a yellow MoDOT truck at the Highway Gardens at the Missouri State Fair.

**#ILookLikeAnEngineer**





Area Engineer Tonya Lohman (left) and Intermediate Construction Inspector Jennifer Sardigal (right) recently participated in the #ILookLikeAnEngineer social media campaign representing MoDOT and the Northwest District. The images above were shared on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



The social media campaign began when a software engineer appeared in a recruiting ad for her company. The online responses to her participation in the campaign questioned whether she actually worked for her company as an engineer because she didn't seem to fit the pre-conceived image of what an engineer would look like - at least to the online responders.

That software engineer, Isis Wenger, posted an image of herself holding up a piece of paper similar to the ones Lohman and Sardigal are holding in the above photo in an effort to combat the stereotypes and empower women in engineering. The hashtag #ILookLikeAnEngineer and its off-shoot #IAmAnEngineer began trending throughout social media platforms almost immediately.

## In The Field

Engineers from several different areas met at the corner of U.S. Route 169 and Route YY in St. Joseph this past week for an extensive field check. The intersection, commonly known as Belt and Mitchell, will receive surface, sidewalk and Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements with Fiscal Year 2016 monies. The project is scheduled for a March 2016 letting. The intersection is in the middle of an extensive retail corridor but also has some residential properties within its boundaries. These driveways and entrances, as well as existing retaining walls, roadway lighting, existing utilities, traffic control devices and many other aspects of the landscape, must be taken into account. Seeing the location in person allows the various engineers involved to discuss and proactively design for both the obstacles and opportunities of the project.

Participating in the field check were Area Engineer Mike Rinehart, Utilities Engineer Adam Watson, Transportation Project Manager Wes Moore, Senior Highway Designer Steve Frank, Transportation Project Designer Greg Anderson, Right of Way Manager Bryan Bailey, Resident Engineer Greg Stervinou and Traffic Operations Engineer José Rodriguez.



The intersection of U.S. Route 169 (Belt Highway) and Route YY (Mitchell Avenue) in St. Joseph has an average daily traffic count of approximately 20,000 cars and serves a large retail corridor.



Engineers from several departments met at the site of the upcoming project to discuss various design elements.



Several commercial and residential driveways are within the project limits and each presents unique challenges which are often best understood during a field check.



The intersection has seen significant deterioration and will receive surface improvements as part of the project.



The current pedestrian walkways are also deteriorating. The project includes both pedestrian crossing and sidewalk improvements.



It may be difficult to see in the photo, but the engineers in the foreground are standing on a lower sidewalk than the engineers in the background. Sloping sidewalks and existing parking lots have required a variety of different approaches to bring the sidewalks up to current ADA standards.

#### For more info

Marcia Johnson  
Communications Specialist  
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3602 N. Belt Highway  
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

#### Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at [Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov](mailto:Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov).

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## Let's Get Ready to Rumble... And Save Lives!



With an increase of 52 percent fatalities in northeast Missouri over this time last year, there is continued effort to increase safety features along roads as well as up the educational effort. One of the features on roads that has been expanded include centerline rumble strips on two-lane roads that are being resurfaced. With approximately 24 miles of road resurfaced on Missouri Route 6 through Lewis and Marion Counties, MoDOT decided to include centerline rumble strips, along with the edge line strips, to the entire length of the project.

"In the last five years, we have had seven deaths on this stretch of road, five of those being head on crashes," said Amy Crawford, area engineer for the Northeast District. "We have to do everything we can to bring that number to zero, so we decided to install the centerline rumble strips," she said.

The leading cause of crashes on Missouri roads is running off the road, so by adding rumble strips, both along the centerline and edge line, they help alert motorists when they are getting out of their lane.

"It only makes sense to include this safety feature on the projects we are already planning to resurface," said Crawford. Missouri is a leading state in using the strips for safety.

Other highways in the Northeast District that have centerline rumble strips in areas include U.S. Route 24, U.S. Route 54, U.S. Route 63 and Missouri Route 19.

## Around the District...



Indian Camp Creek Bridge on Warren County Route J is in the process of being replaced. Pictured is the current progress of the project.



CPR Training is wrapping up for the Northeast District. Shari Dye, district safety and health manager, is pictured going over the proper use of an AED with a class.





Route H in Lincoln County recently received a high-friction treatment that improved traction on the roadway.



Northeast Day at the state fair was Aug. 17. Pictured are Thomas Ragland (Paris), Jonathan Bruner (Traffic) and Jamie Mathes (Memphis) assisting fairgoers with questions.

#### For more info

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#### Comments & Suggestions

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## KC District Wins National Award, Recognition for KCNN

Last year, the Kansas City District launched a new communications tool geared for the field offices. The Communications staff was looking for ways to communicate with our maintenance employees who have the least access to technology -- the Kansas City News Network was born.

KCNN is a simple powerpoint that shows the latest updates in district, state and national transportation news. Surveyed employees said they felt like they knew more and this was a valuable tool to add to the morning meeting.

This month, the KC District Communications team was named a finalist in [PR News' Platinum PR Awards program](#) in the **Internal Publication (print or online)** category for KCNN.

The finalists of the Platinum PR Awards set industry standards for excellence across all areas of public relations. Finalists are from corporations, agencies and non-profits — both large and small — that took chances, made tremendous strides in their communications efforts and understand the power of public relations.



At the same time this tool was launched, the communications team also rolled out the Daily DOT for our office staff. Both tools share much more communication than the previous tools combined, but targeted to the audience. Check out the latest edition of KCNN on your facility TV monitor every Monday morning!

## KC Police Department Honors Jeff Gardner, Incident Response Coordinator

On Aug. 18, a large number of uniformed officers and their families filled a room at the Kansas City Police Department downtown. They were there to see a family member, or possibly a colleague receive an honor for going above and beyond the call of duty. Also in that group, the MoDOT family. They were also there to see one of their own.

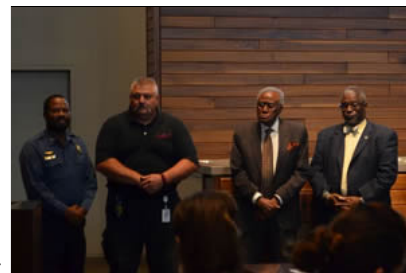
Incident Management Coordinator Jeff Gardner was recognized by KCPD with Certificate of Appreciation.

With the Kansas City Mayor, council members and Kansas City Police looking on, Gardner was asked to come to the front of the room to be acknowledged. He was lauded for his efforts to help partner with all emergency responders to clear incidents quickly and safely. As the room listened, KCPD read aloud some of his accomplishments.

*"Since becoming the Incident Management Coordinator at MoDOT, he has introduced the concept of hosting regular after-action meetings in the weeks following a major incident. Various emergency response personnel are able to exchange ideas at these meetings and discuss their response to such events. The goal is to improve the safety of emergency service workers and the public."*

*One example of improving safety for emergency service workers happened earlier this year. Mr. Gardner was able to secure funding for portable crime scene barriers, which MoDOT donated to KCPD's Accident Investigation Section to use at crash scenes."*

After the ceremony, Gardner was surrounded by his other family, members of the Kansas City Police Department. It was a chance for them to congratulate him. The efforts Gardner has made can truly be said that he has gone beyond the call the duty. Check out photos from the event online.



## Ginormous Girders Make Their Way to Bi-State Bridge Project

It's not every day you can use the term "ginormous" in a sentence. But such was the case this week as crews on the new U.S. 69 Highway Bridge over the Missouri River prepared to receive bridge girders that could only be called ginormous.

The girders were 6.5 feet tall and up to 168 feet long. Manufactured in Kansas City, Kansas, the girders traveled via tractor trailer eastbound on I-70 and arrived at I-635 and Horizons Parkway. Check out the [Kansas City Star](#) pictorial of the delivery.

The new structure will include multiple lanes and bike/pedestrian access. It will be open to traffic in December 2016. This project is shared by the Kansas Department of Transportation and MoDOT. Learn more about this project on our website.



### For more info

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### Comments & Suggestions

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## Work Begins on Columbia I-70 Bridges

Work is underway on replacing the Interstate 70 bridges at Business Loop 70, Garth Avenue and Rangeline Street.

Although there will be only a few temporary overnight lane closures of I-70 during construction, traffic is expected to move slower through the construction area.

Other lane closures will occur at Rangeline, Garth Avenue, Creasy Springs, the South I-70 Outer Road and the intersection of West Boulevard and Business Loop 70 throughout the project. Many of these closures will happen at night and will not affect daytime commutes.

While road closures have been designed to keep traffic disruptions to a minimum, there still will be times when drivers will have to detour around the work. Koestner said MoDOT and contractor Emery Sapp will provide ample notice of any lane closures so drivers will be prepared.

An average of 80,000 vehicles a day cross the I-70 bridges at these three locations. The structures date back to 1957 and are in poor condition, but safe for travel.

For more information and to sign up to receive weekly e-mail updates on the project, including information on traffic impacts that might affect you, visit [www.modot.org/ColumbiaBridges](http://www.modot.org/ColumbiaBridges).

The \$18 million design-build project, which also includes building new roundabouts on the north and south sides of I-70 at the Business Loop 70/West Boulevard interchange and at Rangeline, has an aggressive construction schedule. To speed up the work, several of the new bridges will be built next to the existing structures and slid into place. The project is scheduled to be complete by Oct. 1, 2016.



Central District Assistant District Engineer Travis Koestner (right) and Emery Sapp and Sons Branch Manager Chip Jones (left) discuss the Columbia I-70 Bridges Project during a press conference on Monday, Aug 24 in Columbia.

## Changes to 50/63 near Lafayette Interchange

Beginning Thursday, Aug. 27, work on the new Lafayette Interchange project in Jefferson City will bring changes for motorists traveling both directions on U.S. Route 50/63 in Jefferson City.

Currently, only one westbound lane of Route 50/63 is open near Lafayette Street. At 5 p.m. on Aug. 27, both westbound lanes of Route 50/63 will be opened and traffic will be diverted down the new Lafayette off ramp. Traffic will continue across Lafayette Street, travel up the new on ramp and back onto westbound 50/63. Motorists currently have access to



Full Size 50/63 Lafayette Interchange Traffic Pattern Map (Effective 8/27/15)

Lafayette Street at this location, but on Aug. 27 access to Lafayette will be closed. This configuration will remain in place until June of 2016. This will allow workers to continue construction of the new interchange, as well as work on the Route 50/63 bridge over Lafayette Street.

Due to the new westbound configuration, the on ramp from Clark Avenue to westbound 50/63 will remain closed until June of 2016.

Also on Aug. 27, the eastbound lanes of 50/63 will be reduced to eleven feet through the work area near Lafayette Street. This alignment will remain in place until the end of this year.

Two lanes will be open in each direction on 50/63 during the work, but traffic may move slower than normal during peak travel times. Motorists are encouraged to seek other routes, if possible.

The work is taking place as part of the Lafayette Street interchange project, a two-year, \$20.3-million project that includes building a new interchange at Route 50/63 and Lafayette Street. A lane will also be added in each direction on the Whitton Expressway from Monroe Street to Lafayette Street and from Lafayette to Clark Avenue. The project also includes the improvement of six bridges along the corridor.

More information, including traffic impact summaries and weekly construction updates, is available at [www.Modot.org/Central/Major\\_Projects/LafayetteInterchange.htm](http://www.Modot.org/Central/Major_Projects/LafayetteInterchange.htm).

## Around the District: Nature Edition



This deer showed up for the Columbia I-70 Bridges project press conference and grabbed a front row seat.



Groundhog Day is quite a few months away on the calendar, but this guy was in the flower bed at the Central District offices chilling out in the sun.

### For more info

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**St. Louis**  
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## MoDOT Investigates History at Base of PSB Ramps

by Andrew Gates

He's not Indiana Jones, but he's MoDOT's closest thing to it. Instead of the distinctive fedora and leather jacket, he jauntily sports a bright yellow hard hat and florescent work vest. And fortunately, the most dangerous thing around him is the noise from the nearby trains and the occasional passing tractor trailer truck. But like the famed fictional archeologist, Michael Meyer found himself intrigued and excited by history at a young age.

"I have never grown up – this is something I wanted to do as a kid. I have a job that fascinates and intrigues me. I can't imagine doing anything else," he said.

Meyer leads a team of preservation specialists for the department who are currently investigating a portion of cleared land between several elevated railroad tracks and the Poplar Street Bridge. They are preserving a portion of St. Louis history that may be impacted by next year's construction to widen the ramp from northbound I-55 to the eastbound bridge.

"What we do is more than archeology – we are tasked to consider how our projects may impact the history the general public wishes to preserve," said Meyer.

That "tasking" is due to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The act instructs organizations involved in construction to consider the impact that work may have on historic areas, such as the downtown St. Louis area.

In many cases, MoDOT's historic preservation office works with the design team to adjust projects to avoid an impact to a historic site. In others, such as this one, where it is impossible to move the bridge or the ramps, the office sets out to investigate and document historical areas to ensure the information is preserved for future generations and for additional study.

In the specific area where Meyer and his four person team are investigating – a mid-19th century settler's home constructed over a mid-18th century French settler.

"We were able to determine through a records search that a French soldier built a home here in about 1765. Then, about the mid-1860s an American settler built a three story home in about the same location. We wanted to see what we could find of both homes. This was a very significant historical site and potentially a fragile one. Most of the earth over the site was about one to two feet deep. So, there was a distinct possibility that historical features could be damaged by something as simple as a loaded truck driving over the area," said Meyer.

Finding the home from the 1860s was easy, Meyer said. They were able to find clear evidence of the 18th century French soldier's home as well. French construction at the time used a process called "post-in-earth," where the builder digs and trench and places vertical walls in that trench – somewhat like a log cabin with vertical logs instead of horizontal. The preservation team was able to locate and identify the distinctive footprint of the "post-in-earth" trenches, despite the challenges the terrain and time have taken.



Foundation uncovered during the team's archaeological dig.



MoDOT intern Jordan Schaeffer removes soil from the historic site for preservation.

Meyer reads the patterns and lines of earth in the dig site like most people read a map. He points out features of the two homes based on a different shade or type of earth that has been uncovered. Most of the time, he is excited about the history that those shades or types of earth represent. That is, until he points to several thick, darker lines of earth that cut across the area that he identifies as looter's trenches.

"That was where collectors dug up the area about six or seven years ago looking for bottles to 'preserve' them. About the same time, a historical building was demolished in the area and they probably decided to come here and look for bottles. They may be preserving history, but are disturbing a much more important historical site to find something commonplace. In doing so, they make it harder to interpret what happened in the past," Meyer said.

The team has also found some evidence of prehistoric cultures – mostly chert flakes from tools. Meyer believes that the tools may



have been discarded as the hunter-gatherers moved from their settlements in the north to a creek entering the Mississippi River in the south.

This work complements work done before around the area. Meyer says the team is creating a database of property around the St. Louis area from the French Colonial time.

“We have contributed to creating a small picture of the colonial era in St. Louis. We’ve looked at houses, outbuildings and other buildings that give us a broader view of life in colonial St. Louis. Different buildings, different status – merchants, soldiers and the like which give us a better understanding of life as St. Louis was colonized. This is important because we need to understand where we came from,” said Meyer.

“Historically, people settle and travel around the area for the same reasons then as we do now. It’s important to study how people dealt with the same problems in the past – infrastructure, bridges, sewer systems. We make a mistake if we don’t take a look at how people in the past solved the same problems we face.”

In this case, Meyer hopes that the work that he does will be part of a greater study of the area.

“It’s a challenge to find something new to build on what we’ve learned before – and it’s exhilarating to find something new that challenges what we thought we knew before.”

## SL District Announces New St. Charles County Area Engineer



The hierarchy of MoDOT’s St. Charles County area team has changed. Jim Wright, recently the resident engineer, is now the area engineer.

Wright is a 2003 graduate of the University of Missouri – Rolla with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering. He is a professional engineer in the state of Missouri and has been with the department for more than 12 years. His first eight years he worked as a construction inspector before being promoted to resident engineer for St. Charles County in 2011.

“I look forward to this new challenge and working with the residents, leaders and businesses of St. Charles County to continue the good work my predecessor Tom Evers did,” said Wright.

Wright began his new role as St. Charles County area engineer on August 6.

### For more info

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## Southwest District at Work



**MAKING REPAIRS** – Senior Maintenance Worker Chris Plaster (left) and Maintenance Worker Austin Davis of the Regional Bridge Crew work to repair the Missouri Route 160 bridge west of Lamar. Because of deterioration, a 20 ton load limit was posted for the bridge in July. Once repairs are complete, the plan is to lift the load limit by Labor Day. (Photo/Steve Smith)



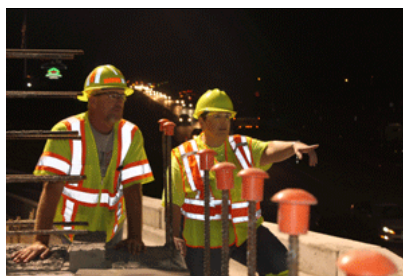
**OUT WITH THE OLD** – A contractor uses a torch to cut through a portion of the old Prigmore Avenue (CR 190) bridge during demolition of the span over Interstate 44/49 near Joplin. The work is part of the construction of a new interchange at the Crossroads Industrial Park. (Photo/Aaron Rieder)



**COLORING WITHIN THE LINES** – Joplin Maintenance Worker Don Sensabaugh drives the striping truck as part of a paint crew working on Missouri Route 43 in Vernon County. (Photo/David Mitchell)



**HERE'S THE PLAN** – Branson Senior Construction Inspector Burt Pitchford (center) and Branson Construction Inspector Kem Collins (right) talk to a man at the public meeting for the rehabilitation of the Missouri Route 13 bridge over Table Rock Lake in Kimberling City. Work on replacing the bridge deck begins September 8. (Photo/Angela Eden)



**FIELD TRIP** – Springfield Senior Construction Inspector Craig Huckaby (left) and MoDOT Interim Director Roberta Broeker visit the site where a new diverging diamond interchange is under construction at U.S. Route 65 and Battlefield Road in Springfield on August 14. On this evening, contractor crews were setting girders on the north half of a new bridge over Route 65. (Photo/David Mitchell)



**SAFETY FIRST** – As members of the Ebenezer Fire Protection District in Greene County look on, Springfield Motorist Assist Operator Ryan Flanigan (left) puts finishing touches on a display of crashed cars urging the use of seatbelts outside the fire protection district's Station 4. The fire protection district requested the display after a fatal crash near the fire station the week before. The victim was not wearing a seatbelt. (Photo/David Mitchell)

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## Southeast District

### Southeast District Remembers Rick Davis, Bob Dodd

Sadly, the Southeast District's MoDOT family recently lost two team members within a month of each other.

Senior Maintenance Worker Rick Davis from the Ellsinore shed and Information Systems Manager Bob Dodd passed on July 11 and Aug. 14, respectively. Both Rick and Bob inspired so many of their coworkers and friends with their optimism throughout their battles with cancer.

"Both Rick and Bob were brave and inspiring. They were so upbeat and had positive attitudes when it came to their treatment and doctor visits," said Roxy Baldrige, SE Financial Services Manager. "I never heard these two men complain about their discomfort or inconvenience caused by their diagnoses."

While it is a difficult time and Rick and Bob's absences are already noticed, their legacies continue to live on in the memories and hearts of their friends and fellow coworkers. To celebrate their lives, their coworkers have shared their favorite memories, stories and thoughts. Click the links below to read the tributes to Rick and Bob.



~ Tribute to Rick Davis ~

~ Tribute to Bob Dodd ~



Top right: Rick Davis (right) hopped on stage at Ryman Auditorium with Dewayne "Catfish" Ligons (left). The pair turned the stage set up for photo opps into a chance to perform! Never bashful, Rick continued to play the out-of-tune prop guitar and sing as tourists passed by.

Bottom left: Bob Dodd usually stayed behind the scenes, but in 2008 he stepped on stage to sing *Weird Al Yankovic's White & Nerdy*. The karaoke performance was part of that year's effort to raise money for the Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign. Click the image to the left or visit <https://youtu.be/UD9J80AnqSM> to watch his performance!

### Southeast Schools Encouraged to Participate in 12th Annual Bridge Building Competition

It's time for Southeast Missouri high school juniors and seniors to put their bridge building skills to the test at MoDOT's 12th Annual Bridge Building Competition. The competition challenges students to design and construct the most efficient model bridge using limited materials—15 pieces of balsa wood, thread and glue.

Schools must register by Sept. 8 to compete in the competition. Contest information and registration forms have been mailed to area high schools. If a school is interested in participating and has not received the registration paperwork by Sept. 1, they are encouraged to contact MoDOT. Additionally, an online registration form is available at: [www.modot.org/southeast/bridgebuildingcompetition.htm](http://www.modot.org/southeast/bridgebuildingcompetition.htm).

The bridge kits will be delivered to the participating schools on Oct. 5 and 6. Completed bridges will be picked up from participating schools on Nov. 2 and 3.

Bridges entered in the competition will be tested Nov. 19 at Cape West 14 Cne in Cape Girardeau. The lightest bridge to carry the greatest load will ultimately be declared the winner. Prizes will also be awarded for the most aesthetic bridge and to the winner of the electronic bridge competition.

Prizes donated by area businesses and organizations will be awarded to the top bridge building winners.

In addition, MoDOT has partnered with Arkansas State University, Southeast Missouri State University, Missouri University of Science and Technology, University of Missouri-Columbia and Southern Illinois University to offer seniors interested in civil engineering up to \$10,000 in scholarships.

For more information,, please contact Senior Highway Designer Anita Clark at (573) 472-5292 or Senior Highway Designer Gretchen Hanks at (573) 472-5294. Videos and photos from past competitions are available at [www.modot.org/southeast/programs/BridgeCompetition.htm](http://www.modot.org/southeast/programs/BridgeCompetition.htm).



Click the image above to view photos from last year's Bridge Building Competition.

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